

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4056

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DIA WASHDC

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TAGS: PINT GR

SUBJECT: PANAGOULIS DEATH: ISSUE ENDED?

REF: ATHENS 4239

1. WHATEVER MYSTERY IN FACT SURROUNDED THE DEATH OF ALEXANDROS PANAGOULIS HAS NOW APPARENTLY BEEN DISPELLED. THE DRIVER OF THE "OTHER VEHICLE" AT THE SCENE OF THE ACCIDENT HAS COME FORWARD TO DESCRIBE WHAT TOOK PLACE: IN SUM, AN AUTO ACCIDENT, IN WHICH THE SPEEDING PANAGOULIS APPEARS LARGELY TO BLAME. THE DRIVER IN QUESTION, A THIRTY-ONE YEAR OLD GREEK EXPLAINED THAT HE FLED THE SCENE FRIGHTENED BY THE ACCIDENT AND BECAUSE HIS CAR'S LICENSE TAGS WERE ILLEGAL.

2. THE GOVERNMENT HAS QUICKLY LAID ALL THIS OUT, THROUGH RADIO, TV, AND FRIENDLY PAPERS IN AN OBJECTIVE, NON-POLEMIC AND COVINCING FASHION. THE OPPOSITION LEADERS, INCLUDING MOST PROMINENTLY ANDREAS PAPANDREOU WHO DID SO MUCH TO STIMULATE THE "ASSASSINATION THEORY", HAVE NOT YET COME TO TERMS WITH THE CONFESSION

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DESCRIBED ABOVE. THE OPPOSITION PRESS WHICH SENSE-

TIONALIZED THE CHARGES OF "MURDER" IS ALSO HAVING
SOME TROUBLE SQUARING THIS DEVELOPMENT WITH ITS CLAIMS
OF YESTERDAY. BUT THEY ARE EQUAL TO THE TASK. IN
FACT, IN THE FACE OF WHAT APPEARS TO BE OVERWHELMING
EVIDENCE TO THE CONTRARY THEY ARE STILL TRYING TO
KEEP THE MURDER THEORY AFLOAT.

3. COMMENT: ANDREAS PAPANDREOU SEEMS TO HAVE STUBBED
HIS TOE. PAPANDREOU WHO HAS DEVELOPED A FONDNESS
FOR ENDORSING THE USE OF "MARXIST ANALYSIS" AND WHO SOUGHT
TO CONSTRUE THE PANAGOULIS DEATH AS A REPETITION OF
THE "Z" AFFAIR, DOES SEEM TO HAVE FULFILLED ONE OF
KARL MARX'S DICTUM: THAT HISTORY REPEATS ITSELF "THE
FIRST TIME AS TRAGEDY, THE SECOND TIME AS FARCE". IN
THE PROCESS, ANDREAS ALSO CONFIRMED THE OPINION OF
MANY--GREEKS AND FOREIGNERS--WHO HAVE A LOW OPINION
OF HIS POLITICAL JUDGMENT.
STEARNS

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